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Version with markings to show changes made

2. (once amended) A method of providing an iron oxide complex for administration to a mammalian subject, the method [~~comprising~~] consisting of:

producing a carboxyalkylated reduced polysaccharide iron oxide complex; and

sterilizing the complex by autoclaving.

7. (once amended) A method according to claim [6] 1, wherein [~~the carboxyalkylation is a carboxymethylation~~] producing the complex includes carboxyalkylating a reduced polysaccharide by carboxymethylation.

10. (once amended) A method according to claim [~~5~~] 1, wherein the [~~derivatized~~] carboxyalkylated, reduced polysaccharide isolated as [~~the~~] a sodium salt does not contain an infrared absorption peak in the region of about 1650 cm^{-1} to about 1800 cm^{-1}.

11. (once amended) A method according to claim [~~5~~] 1, wherein producing the [~~derivatized~~] carboxyalkylated reduced polysaccharide is achieved at a temperature of less than about 50 °C.

12. (once amended) A method according to claim 11, wherein producing the [~~derivatized~~] carboxyalkylated reduced polysaccharide is achieved at a temperature of less than about 40 °C.

13. (amended) A method according to claim [~~5~~] 1, wherein the iron oxide is superparamagnetic

18. (amended) A reduced polysaccharide iron oxide complex produced according to the method of claim 1, wherein the produced [~~such~~] complex [~~being~~] is stable at a temperature of at least 100 °C.

19. (once amended) A reduced carboxyalkylated polysaccharide iron oxide complex [~~according to claim 18, such~~] wherein the produced complex [~~being~~] is stable at a temperature of about 121 °C.

20. (once amended) A reduced polysaccharide iron oxide complex according to claim 19, [~~such~~] wherein the produced complex [~~being~~] is stable at a temperature of at least about 121 °C for a period of time effective to sterilize the complex.

22. (once amended) A reduced polysaccharide iron oxide complex according to claim [~~21~~] 20, wherein the [~~derivatized~~] carboxyalkylated reduced polysaccharide is selected

from the group consisting of a [~~carboxyalkyl~~] carboxymethyl, carboxyethyl and carboxypropyl reduced polysaccharide.

24. (once amended) A reduced polysaccharide iron oxide complex according to claim [~~23~~] 22, wherein the reduced polysaccharide is a reduced dextran.

25. (once amended) A reduced polysaccharide iron complex according to claim 22, wherein the [~~derivatized~~] carboxyalkylated reduced dextran is a carboxymethyl reduced dextran.

26. (twice amended) A reduced polysaccharide iron oxide complex according to claim 24, wherein [~~the amount of derivatization of~~] the carboxyalkylated reduced dextran [~~is~~] comprises at least about 750 micromole of carboxyl groups per gram of polysaccharide.

27. (twice amended) A reduced polysaccharide iron oxide complex according to claim 26, wherein [~~the level of derivatization of~~] the carboxyalkylated reduced dextran [~~is~~] comprises at least about 900 micromole of carboxyl groups per gram of polysaccharide.

28. (twice amended) A reduced polysaccharide iron oxide complex according to claim 27, wherein [~~the amount of derivatization of~~] the carboxyalkylated reduced dextran [~~is~~] comprises at least about [1,100] 1100 micromole of carboxyl groups per gram of polysaccharide.

29. (twice amended) A reduced polysaccharide iron oxide complex according to claim [~~26~~] 28, wherein [~~the amount of derivatization of~~] the carboxyalkylated reduced dextran [~~is~~] comprises [at least] less than about 1500 micromole of carboxyl groups per gram of polysaccharide[~~, wherein said complex remains a colloidal suspension without substantial aggregation~~] wherein said complex does not form substantial particulates.

53. (once amended) A method of providing a contrast agent for in vivo MRI of a subject according to claim 1, [~~comprising~~] consisting of the steps of:

formulating a composition which is a carboxymethylated reduced [~~coated~~] ultrasmall superparamagnetic iron oxide [~~colloid~~] complex; and

terminally sterilizing the composition by autoclaving.

54. (once amended) A method of providing a hematinic agent for treating a subject deficient in iron according to claim 1, [~~comprising~~] consisting of the steps of:

formulating a composition which is a carboxymethylated reduced [~~coated~~] ultrasmall iron oxide [colloid] complex; and

terminally sterilizing the composition by autoclaving.

64. (once amended) A reduced [~~derivatized~~] carboxyalkylated polysaccharide iron oxide complex which is stable at a temperature of about 121 °C, wherein [~~the~~] a sodium salt of the complex does not contain an infrared absorption peak in the region of about 1650 cm^{-1} to about 1800 cm^{-1}.

66. (once amended) A reduced [~~derivatized~~] carboxyalkylated polysaccharide iron oxide complex according to claim 64, wherein the polysaccharide is [~~carboxyalkylated~~] carboxymethylated.

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